

CONSERVATIVE EVANGELICALS

Enlarged May 5, 2011 (David Cloud, Fundamental Baptist Information Service, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, fbns@wayoflife.org; for instructions about subscribing and unsubscribing or changing addresses, see the information paragraph at the end of the article)

There is a lot of noise today among some “fundamentalists” about “conservative evangelicals,” and there is a growing association between the two groups.

Central Baptist Seminary of Minnesota, Calvary Baptist Seminary of Lansdale, Pennsylvania, and Northland International University (formerly Northland Baptist Bible College) have all recently praised “evangelical conservatives” for their “vigorous commitment to and defense of the gospel.”

Northland recently invited Bruce Ware, Southern Baptist Seminary professor, in to conduct a seminar for pastors. To justify this, former Northland president Les Ollila sent out a letter in December 2010 stating:

“At Northland we have chosen to keep our focus on the highest concerns facing our generation while keeping Fundamentalism centered on the historic fundamentals of our faith that best articulate our core understanding of biblical truth.”

That is the “in essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty” philosophy. To say that it was the position of “historic fundamentalism” is true, but that does not make it right. (We dealt with this in the article “In Essentials Unity, in Non-essentials Liberty,” December 8, 2010).

Calvary Baptist Seminary invited Southern Baptist pastor Mark Dever as a speaker at their National Leadership Conference. In a mailing to its alumni announcing its February 2011 National Leadership Conference, the seminary’s leadership stated: “We should grant each other the freedom to hold differing viewpoints and to refrain from caustic letter-writing campaigns to or about those with whom one might differ. ... in our zeal to earnestly contend for the faith, fundamentalism became more concerned about minor issues and less concerned about what the Bible clearly presents as the majors” (Aug. 25, 2010). The “minor issues” are said to be such things as which English translation to use, acceptable dress standards, musical styles, election, and baptism. The seminary used this philosophy to explain why they invited Dever for the 2011 conference.

This year Kevin Bauder of Central Baptist has used his blog to praise “conservative evangelicals” such as Southern Baptist Seminary head Al Mohler, John MacArthur, John Piper, D.A. Carson, and R. C. Sproul. Central recently invited Bill Edmonson, a graduate of the New Evangelical Gordon Conwell Seminary, to lead a workshop in February 2011. Central graduate David Sorenson observes: “Dr. Clearwaters, the founder of Central, would roll over in his grave

if he knew this. They are becoming new-evangelicals in fundamentalist clothing. They want the support of both the northern fundamentalist movement as well as that of what Bauder calls 'conservative evangelicals' (i.e. new-evangelicals). They are kind of like the guy in the civil war who wore gray pants and a blue jacket. He won the support of neither side. But nevertheless, that is what Central is trying to do."

What is glaringly left out of this issue is the matter of separation.

Bauder claims that the "conservative evangelicals" aren't New Evangelicals and he conveniently defines New Evangelicalism in a way that proves his point (whereas his predecessors at Central, Richard Clearwaters and Earnest Pickering, understood New Evangelism much more clearly).

While there are many aspects of New Evangelicalism, the defining principle from its inception was a "repudiation of separatism." That was the way that Harold Ockenga put it. That is Billy and Franklin Graham's foundational working principle.

And by that definition, every Southern Baptist conservative is a New Evangelical. That is evident by the simple fact that they remain in the SBC, which is an unholy organization that encompasses theological liberalism, Charismaticism, Masonism, ecumenical evangelism, modern textual criticism, Amillennialism, the rock & roll emerging philosophy, female preachers, psychoheresy, Catholic mysticism, and other errors and evils.

The Southern Baptist Convention is filled with men who have the same unscriptural philosophy as Ed Young Jr., with his non-judgmental, downplay doctrine approach and his close association with heretics such as Pentecostal Word-Faith preacher Brian Houston of Sydney, Australia. Brian's wife is his "co-pastor"; he preaches a prosperity gospel; he thinks vain muttering is "tongues speaking"; and his worship leader participates in Roman Catholic conferences. The "conservative" Southern Baptist Ed is fine with all that.

Consider Rick Warren. He preaches the heretical "judge not" philosophy; turns the church into a rock & roll entertainment center; says God won't ask about your doctrinal views; continually and approvingly quotes from heretics in his writings and preaching (such as Roman Catholic universalists Mother Teresa, Henri Nouwen, and Thomas Merton); promotes Roman Catholic contemplative mysticism; likens Christian fundamentalists to Islamic terrorists; calls for unity between Baptists, Roman Catholics, Pentecostals, Anglicans, etc.; promotes the exceedingly liberal Baptist World Alliance; yokes together with New Age practitioners; says that believers should work with unbelievers and pagan religionists to build the kingdom of God; and presents Roman Catholic one-worlder Tony Blair with a peace prize (March 2011). For documentation see <http://www.wayoflife.org/database/warrenheader.html>

Consider John Piper. He's scheduled to preach at the annual Southern Baptist pastors conference in June 2011, joining hands again with Rick Warren. In April 2011, Piper conducted a Desiring God conference at Warren's Saddleback Church.

These men not only do not practice biblical separation, they hate it.

If you think I am wrong on this, send me a book or a preaching series by a “conservative evangelical” on separation. In reality, the only thing they have to say about separation is ridicule for those who try to practice it. They refuse to be restrained by separation. They don’t have a heart for it. They want a big tent, but God’s Word doesn’t allow it.

“Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them” (Romans 16:17).

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